The Virtuoso-Pianist.

Part I.

Preparatory Exercises for the Acquirement of Agility, Independence, Strength and Perfect Evenness in the Fingers.

Nº 1.

Stretch between the fifth and fourth fingers of the left hand in ascending, and the fifth and fourth fingers of the right hand in descending.

For studying the 20 exercises in this First Part, begin with the metronome set at 60, gradually increasing the speed up to 108; this is the meaning of the double metronome-mark at the head of each exercise.

Lift the fingers high and with precision, playing each note very distinctly.

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(1) For brevity, we shall henceforward indicate only by their figures those fingers which are to be specially trained in each exercise; e.g., 3-4 in Nº 2; 2-3-4 in Nº 3, etc.

Observe that, throughout the book, both hands are continually executing the same difficulties; in this way the left hand becomes as skilful as the right. Besides, the difficulties executed by the left hand in ascending, are exactly copied by the same fingers of the right hand in descending; this new style of exercise will cause the hands to acquire perfect equality.

Nº 2.

(3-4) When this exercise is mastered, recommence the preceding one, and play both together four times without interruption; the fingers will gain considerably by practising these exercises, and those following, in this way.

(1) The fourth and fifth fingers being naturally weak, it should be observed that this exercise, and those following it up to Nº 31, are intended to render them as strong and agile as the second and third.

(2-3-4) Before beginning to practise Nº 3, play through the preceding exercises once or twice without stopping. When Nº 3 is mastered, practise Nº 4, and then Nº 5, and as soon as they are thoroughly learned play through all three at least four times without interruption, not stopping until the last note on page 6. The entire work should be practised in this manner. Therefore, when playing the numbers in the First Part, stop only on the last note on pp. 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 21.

Nº 4.

(3-4-5) (1) Special exercise for the 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers of the hand.

Nº 5.

(1-2-3-4-5) We repeat, that the fingers should be lifted high, and with precision, until this entire volme is mastered.

(5) To obtain the good results which we promise those who study this work, it is indispensable to play daily, at least once, the exercises already learned.

(3-4-5) Exercise of the greatest importance for the 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers.

(1-2-3-4-5) Very important exercise for all five fingers.

Extension of the 4th and 5th, and general finger-exercise.

(3-4) Preparation for the trill, for the 3rd and 4th fingers of the left hand in ascending (1); and for the 3rd and 4th of the right, descending (2).

(3-4-5) Another preparation for the trill, for the 4th and 5th fingers.

Extension of 1-5, and exercise for 3-4-5.

(3-4-5)
13.

(3-4) Another preparation for the trill, for the 3rd and 4th fingers.

Extension of 1-2, and exercise for all 5 fingers.

15.

Extension of 3-5, and exercise for 3-4-5.

Extension of 1-2, 2-4, 4-5, and exercise for 3-4-5.

18.
(1-2-3-4-5)

19.

Extension of 2-4, 4-5, and exercise for 2-3-4.

End of Part I.

After having mastered this First Part, play it through once or twice daily for some time before commencing the study of the Second ("transcendent") Part; by so doing, one is sure to obtain every possible advantage that this work promises. Complete mastery of Part I gives the key to the difficulties found in Part II.

Transcendent Exercises for Preparing the Fingers for the Virtuoso Exercises.

Observe, that the work done by the 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers of the left hand in the first beat of each measure (A) is repeated inversely by the same fingers of the right hand in the third beat of the same measure (B).

Practise the exercises in Part II, like those in Part I, with the metronome at 60; similarly practise all the following exercises where the tempo is not indicated, and gradually increase the speed to 108. Wherever a different tempo is required, it will be indicated at the head of the exercise.

Having fully mastered this exercise, go on to the next without stopping on this note.

Same object as Nº 21. (3-4-5)

Practise the exercises of this Second Part as we directed for Part I (top of p. 4); thus, in playing through the exercises, stop only on the last notes on pp. 24, 29, 33, 37, 41, 44, 46, and 49.

(3-4-5)
23.

24.
(3-4-5)

25.
(1-2-3-4-5)

26.
(1-2-3-4-5)

(1-2-3-4-5): Prepares the 4th and 5th fingers for the trill given further on.

(3-4-5)
28.

(1-2-3-4-5) Preparation for the Trill, for all five fingers.

Trill alternating between 1-2 and 4-5.

(1-2-3-4-5, and extensions)

31.

Turning the thumb under.

Turning the thumb under the 2nd finger.

M. M. ♩ = 40 to 72.

32.

Repeat this measure 4 times.

Turning the thumb under the 3rd finger.

33.

M.M. ♩ = 40 to 72.

Repeat this measure 4 times.

Turning the thumb under the 4th finger.

34.

M. M. ♩ = 60 to 108.

Repeat this measure 10 times.

Turning the thumb under the 5th finger. This exercise is of the highest importance.

Another example of turning the thumb under.

(1) Hold down these three notes with each hand without striking them, while executing these 12 measures.

Preparatory exercise for the study of scales.

38.

The 12 Major Scales, and the 12 Minor Scales.

Each major scale is followed by its relative minor.

There are two ways of playing the minor scale; we thought it best to give them here after each major scale, leaving it to the instructor to teach them as he sees fit. We mark by a figure **1** the first (modern) minor scale, also termed the "harmonic minor scale;" and by a figure **2** the second (ancient) minor scale, also termed the "melodic minor scale."

We know, that the modern or harmonic minor scale has a minor sixth and the leading-note both ascending and descending; whereas the ancient or melodic minor scale has a major sixth and the leading note is ascending, and a minor seventh and minor sixth in descending.

F major.
1. D minor.
2. D minor.

B♭ major.
1. G minor.
2. G minor.

E♭ major.
1. C minor.
2. C minor.

A♭ major.
1. F minor.
2. F minor.

D♭ major.
1. B♭ minor.
2. B♭ minor.

Gb major.
1. Eb minor.
2. Eb minor.

B major.

1. G♯ minor.

2. G♯ minor.

E major.
1. C# minor.
2. C# minor.

A major.

1. F♯ minor.

2. F♯ minor.

D major.
1. B minor.
2. B minor.

G major.
1. E minor.
2. E minor.

Chromatic Scales.

At a major sixth.
At a minor sixth.

In contrary motion, beginning on the octave.
In contrary motion, beginning on the minor third.
In contrary motion, beginning on the major third.
Another fingering, which we particularly recommend for legato passages.

Arpeggios on the Triads, in the 24 Keys.

E♭ major.
C minor.
A♭ major.
F minor.
D♭ major.
B♭ minor.

G♭ major.
E♭ minor.
B major.
G♯ minor.
E major.
C♯ minor.

A major.
F♯ minor.
D major.
B minor.
G major.
E minor.

Extension (stretching) of the fingers
in chords of the diminished seventh, in arpeggios.

4 times.

8

Extension of the fingers in chords of the dominant seventh, in arpeggios.

M.M. ♩ = 60 to 120.

Repeat this measure 4 times.

43.

4 times.

4 times.

End of Part II.

Parts I and II of this work being the key to the difficulties in Part III, it is evidently very important that they should be thoroughly mastered before commencing the virtuoso studies contained in Part III.

Part III.

Virtuoso Exercises, for Obtaining a Mastery over the Greatest Mechanical Difficulties.

Notes repeated in groups of three.

Lift the fingers high and with precision, without raising hand or wrist. As soon as the first four measures are well learned, take up the rest of the exercise.

simile
3 2 1
3 2 1
3 2 1
3 2 1
3 2 1
3 2 1
3 2 1
3 2 1

Notes repeated in groups of two, by all five fingers.

Study the first fingering until it is thoroughly mastered; practise similarly each of the five following fingerings then play through the whole exercise without stopping.

4th fingering.
simile
5th fingering.
simile
6th fingering.
simile

The Trill
for all five fingers.

Practise the first 6 measures until they can be executed in quite a rapid tempo; then practise the rest of the trill. Where the fingering is changed (1), be careful that not the slightest unevenness is apparent.

It is of interest to note that Mozart used this exercise for the study of the trill.
Thalberg's trill.

Notes repeated in groups of four.

Lift the fingers high and with precision throughout this exercise, without raising hand or wrist. When the first line is mastered, and not before, take up the rest of the exercise.

Wrist - exercise.

Detached Thirds and Sixths.

Lift the wrists well after each stroke, holding the arms perfectly quiet; the wrist should be supple, and the fingers firm without stiffness. Practise the first four measures until an easy wrist-movement is obtained; then take up the rest of the exercise.

Detached Sixths.

Same remarks as for the thirds.
(M.M. ♩ = 40 to 84)

Stretches from the 1st to the 4th fingers, and from the 2d to the 5th, in each hand.

Legato Thirds.

We recommend careful study of this exercise, as Thirds occupy a very important place in difficult music. All notes must be struck evenly and very distinctly.

Scales in Legato Thirds. It is indispensable to practise scales in legato thirds. To obtain a smooth legato, keep the fifth finger of the right hand for an instant on its note while the thumb and 3d finger are passing over to the next third; in the left hand, the thumb is similarly held for an instant. Notes to be held are indicated by half-notes.(1) Proceed similarly in the chrormatic scale further on, and in all scales in Thirds.

(M.M. ♩= 40 to 84)

Chromatic scales in minor thirds.

(M.M. ♩= 40 to 84)

Preparatory Exercise for Scales in Octaves.

The wrists should be very supple, the fingers taking the octaves should be held firmly but without stiffness, and the unoccupied fingers should assume a slightly rounded position.

At first repeat these three first lines slowly until a good wrist-movement is attained, and then accelerate the tempo, continuing the exercise without interruption. If the wrists become fatigued, play more slowly until the feeling of fatigue has disappeared, and then gradually accelerate up to the first tempo. *See remarks to Nº 48.*

8
8
8
8
8
8
8
8

Scales in Thirds, in the Keys Most Used.

Play these scales legato, and very evenly; it is highly important to master them thoroughly. *See* remarks to Nº 50.

A major.
E major.
F major.

A major.
E major.
F major.

B♭ major.
E♭ major.
A♭ major.

A minor.
D minor.
G minor.

Scales in Octaves in the 24 Keys.

First practise each of these scales until it can be executed with facility; then play through all 24 without interruption.

We cannot too strongly insist on the absolute necessity of a proper wrist-movement; it is the only means of executing octaves without stiffness, and with suppleness, vivacity and energy.

See the explanations for Nos 48 and 51.

(1) In all scales in Octaves, the black keys are to be taken with the 4th finger of either hand.

E♭ major.
8
C minor.
8
A♭ major.
8
F minor.
8
D♭ major.
8
B♭ minor.
8

G major.
E♭ minor.
8
B major.
8
G♯ minor.
E major.
8
C♯ minor.
8

A major.
8
F# minor.
D major.
8
B minor.
8
G major.
E minor.

The Fourfold Trill in Thirds, for all five fingers.

Execute this exercise very smoothly and evenly, striking each Third very clearly.

The Threefold Trill.

Same remark as for Nº 54.

ben marcato

Special fingerings for the fourfold Trill.

legato.

another fingering.

Scales in Broken Octaves, in the 24 Keys.

Play them through without stopping.

This highly important exercise likewise prepares the wrists for the study of the tremolo.

Special fingerings for the fourfold Trill.

legato.

another fingering.

Scales in Broken Octaves, in the 24 Keys.

Play them through without stopping.
This highly important exercise likewise prepares the wrists for the study of the tremolo.

(1) Thoughout this exercise, take the black keys with the 4th finger of each hand.

E♭ major.
C minor.
A♭ major.
F minor.
D♭ major.
B♭ minor.

G♭ major.
E♭ minor.
8
B major.
8
G♯ minor.
E major.
8
C♯ minor.
8

A major.
8
F♯ minor.
D major.
8
B minor.
8
G major.

Broken Arpeggios in Octaves, in the 24 Keys.

To begin with, practise the first arpeggio in C, which must be played cleanly and distinctly, with a good wrist-movement, before passing to the next in minor.

Similarly practise each of the 24 arpeggios; then play them all through without interruption.

M. M. ♩= 40 to 72

57.

C major. 8

A minor. (1) 4 (1) 4

F major. 8

D minor. 8

B♭ major. 8

G minor.

E♭ major. 8

C minor. 8

(1) Throughout this exercise, take the black keys with the 4th finger of each hand.

(1) As this arpeggio, and the next one in E♭ minor, are on black keys alone, it makes no difference whether the 4th or 5th finger be employed.

E major.
8
C♯ minor.
8
A major.
8
F♯ minor.
D major.
8
B minor.
8
G major.
E minor.
8

Sustained Octaves.

accompanied by detached notes.

Strike the octaves vigorously without lifting the wrists, and hold them down while deftly executing the intermediate notes with a good finger-movement.

8va bassa
8va bassa

Fourfold Trill in Sixths,

for the combination of the 1st and 4th, and 2nd and 5th, fingers of each hand.

Neither hand nor wrist should be moved in the least while playing this exercise.

(M. M. ♩ = 40 to 84)
simile
simile
simile

The Tremolo.

To properly execute the tremolo, it should be played with the same rapidity as the roll on the drum.

Practise slowly at first; then gradually accelerate the tempo until the movement indicated (M.M. ♩= 72) is reached. Finally, by oscillations of the wrists, the rapidity is still further augmented up to the tempo of the drum-roll. This étude is long and difficult; but the excellent result will fully repay the pianist for the trouble and fatigue encountered. Steibelt made his hearers shiver by his execution of the tremolo.

dim.
p
cresc.
f
ff
p
pp
p

p
cresc.
f
p
pp
cresc.
mf
pp
smorz.

poco rit.
a tempo
perdendosi

p
p
pp
p
f
p
f
ff
dim.
p

Concluding Remarks.

Now that the student has practised this entire volume, he is acquainted with the chief mechanical difficulties; but, if he would enjoy the fruit of his toil, and become a real virtuoso, he ought to play this entire book through every day for a certain time; only in this way can he familiarize himself with these great difficulties. An hour is required to play the book through.

The greatest artists find it necessary to repeat daily exercises for several hours, merely to "keep up their playing." We should not, therefore, be accused of exaggerating the matter when we require of a student aspiring to true virtuosity, that he should play these exercises through every day.